

2007 Farm Bill Nutrition Title:

Promoting Health and Fighting Hunger in the United States

- **Reforms benefit rules to adequately cover food expenses and sustain participants for the entire month.**
 - Raises and indexes the minimum standard deduction.
 - Increases the minimum benefit for food stamp recipients, which is especially important for senior citizens in need.
 - Indexes asset limits and excludes retirement and education accounts as assets.
 - Lifts dependent care cap, allowing participants to deduct the full cost of dependent care
 - Excludes special combat pay as income
- **The 2007 Farm Bill supports programs that combat food insecurity.**
 - Extends and funds The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which provides commodities and other assistance to states and helps stock food banks and homeless shelters. Expands funding for the program each year from \$140 million in 2008 to \$250 million in 2012.
 - The Puerto Rico and American Samoa Block Grant Program, and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).
- **Renames the Food Stamp Program the “Secure Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program” (SSNAP).**
 - Reflects the fact that the program has transitioned away from paper coupons, known as food stamps to a system of electronic benefits, which increases efficiency for users and decreases fraud and abuse in the program.
- **Updates the Secure Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to reflect technological advances and decrease abuse.**
 - Ends the use of Food Stamp Coupons and requires the use of Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT).
 - Permits technological modernization of State food stamp administration programs while maintaining requirements for merit-based personnel to communicate and determine eligibility for applicants and participants
 - Strengthens the ability of USDA to punish violators by increasing the fines for vendors who participate in the EBT program from \$10,000 to \$100,000 per violation.
- **Ensures that Senior Citizens have ample access to food that is healthy and fresh.**
 - Extends the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) which helps many low-income elderly individuals that need additional assistance or are reluctant to apply for food stamps.
 - Expands the authority of the Senior Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program which provides senior citizens with vouchers to buy fresh produce at markets and roadside stands.

Farm Bill Nutrition Program Facts:

- A 2006 study by USDA’s Economic Research Service (ERS) found that 11% of U.S. households were food insecure in 2005.
- The average food stamp recipient is a single working mother with two children and an average weekly benefit of \$37.
- 50% of all food stamp participants are under 18, and about half of all households include one child.
- USDA oversees nearly 20 nutrition assistance programs which are mostly administered by states, schools and local grantees operating under federal regulations.
- Eligibility for food stamps is primarily based on a household’s economic status, taking into account income, cost of living and other financial factors.

- **Promotes the health and well-being of children and low-income people.**
 - Increases funding to \$406 million for the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (DOD Fresh) which provides a greater variety of fresh produce to schools.
 - Continues and expands the USDA Snack Program, which helps schools provide healthy snacks to students during after-school activities and expands the program to all 50 states, providing \$350 million over 5 years for the program.
 - Creates a demonstration project that will evaluate strategies to address obesity among low-income communities
 - Reasserts the importance of USDA nutrition monitoring, which provides vital information. This data, combined with the USDA dietary guidelines, provides the most accurate picture of American dietary habits.
- **Improves assistance through the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.**
 - Studies the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations to determine if the food packages meet dietary guidelines and needs
 - Authorizes \$5 million per year for a fund to purchase native and locally grown food
- **Improves accessibility of nutrition program application process.**
 - Allows states to use telephonic signatures for food stamp applications.
 - Requires state agency employees to make determinations about food stamp eligibility and to communicate with applicants about eligibility issues.
- **Reauthorizes the Congressional Hunger Center, which provides training for anti-hunger leaders domestically and internationally.**
 - The Congressional Hunger Center operates the Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellows Program and the Mickey Leland International Fellows Program, which provide a select group of fellows the skills, knowledge and experience to become effective anti-hunger leaders.